Celebrating the Life of

RAFE TAYLOR, SR

SUNRISE
December 19, 1914

SUNSET
April 22, 2011

Friday, April 29, 2011 - 11:00 A.M.

ANTIOCH MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH
1004 14TH Street
Oakland, California 94607
Rev. Todd Wheelock, Pastor & Officiate

Rev. Dr. Martha C. Taylor
Pastor, Elmhurst Presbyterian Church
Eulogist

OBITUARY

"Lord thou has been our dwelling place in all generations. Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God."
Psalm 90: 1-2

Rafe Taylor, Sr., also known as "Deac.", "Big Daddy" and "Brother Pastor', began his life on December 19, 1914, in Creston, Louisiana. He was one of fifteen children, 8 boys and 7 girls, born to the parentage of Minervy Demery Taylor and William Taylor. Rafe accepted Christ into his life at a young age and was baptized at Old Mt. Zion Baptist Church, Creston Louisiana, under the pastorate of Reverend Lewis.

Rafe's early childhood was spent working on the family farm and during this period he received his early education by attending the one room schoolhouse located near their farm. In 1932, he left the family farm and moved to Bossier City, Louisiana where he united with Bossier City Baptist Church.

While living in Bossier City, he worked on the Barksdale Air Force Base, which later became known as Barksdale Field. He cooked for military officers where he was able to sharpen his culinary skills. It was in Bossier City where Rafe met the love of his life, Elnora Lee Jones, who soon became his wife. They remained married for 72 years and to this union, God blessed them with eight children, 3 boys and 5 girls.

Seeking a better life and better educational opportunities for their children, Rafe and Elnora moved to California.

Soon after arriving in California, Rafe started working for the American Brass and Iron Foundry where he worked for approximately 9 years. In 1952 he began working for the City of Oakland-Public Works Department where he remained until his retirement in 1977.

Rafe was instrumental in the organizing of Antioch Missionary Baptist Church. Shortly after arriving in Oakland, California, Rafe joined a small church where a pastor by the name of Rev. J. L. Thomas was just getting the membership organized. Rafe joined with them to become one of the seven first Board of Director members of what is now called the Antioch Missionary Baptist Church.

He remained a faithful and dedicated member for over 65 years until declining health prevented his active participation A few of the many positions he held in the Antioch Baptist Church were Chairman of the Deacon Board, Brotherhood leader, Liaison to the Matrons, Honorary Liaison to the W.I.A., Sunday School Teacher and Rest Home Ministry with the late Rev. Curtis Brady. The late pastor Rev. R. T. George often affectionately referred to him as the "Pastor." He was well known throughout the religious com-

munity as the "Praying Deacon" and "Friend to the Preacher." Many have gone on to become ministers and teachers because of the mentoring received from Deacon Rafe Taylor Sr. He was very supportive and encouraging to all auxiliaries within the church. Rafe firmly believed in continuous self-improvement and loved studying the Word of God. Wanting to improve his teaching skills and strengthen his biblical knowledge of the Word, he enrolled and graduated from the Bay Cities Bible College where he excelled in his religious studies.

When asked to describe himself in one sentence, Rafe would proudly proclaim, "I am a Lover"-meaning he truly loved the Lord, his wife, family, friends and everybody. His spirituality and dedication to God, the church and family are qualities that had a major impact on his family. Many times when you visited him, you would find him sitting at the kitchen table with his Bible open and your Bible study lessons would begin. He continuously studied the Bible, reading from Genesis to Revelation many times. When his children were young, he always had prayer and Bible study with them in the evening. His grandchildren affectionately called him "Big Daddy" as they are so enamored by his presence and he seemed like such a giant of a man. His favorite words of wisdom were, "Get all you can, Can all you get, Then, sit on the can." Rafe loved the DFST (Demery, Farley, Syas, Taylor) Family Reunions which he attended the all of them across the United States until his health failed him. His face would light up when it was roll call time for the oldest family member to be recognized. He truly enjoyed being the "patriarch" amongst 400 plus family members who would attend.

Rafe loved to "work the soil" which yielded many of the vegetables and fruits for his family and others. He enjoyed traveling to Hawaii and taking vacation cruises on luxury cruise liners. Also, he enjoyed fishing, cooking, baking potato pies, reading, studying to improve himself, his grandchildren and adoring his beautiful wife, Elnora.

Rafe leaves to cherish his memories, his wife Elnora Lee; four brothers Eddie Taylor, Flenore Taylor (Ernestine), Jonathan Taylor (Mary), Nathaniel Taylor (Mary Belle); three daughters Beatrice Jett (Kenneth), Laura Johnson (Arthur Lee), Sharon Howard (Melvin); two sons Rafe Taylor Jr. (Norma), Jimmie Taylor (Hazel); 14 grandchildren, Cassandra Cooper, Pamela Price, Kenneth E Jett, Terri Jett, Tami Taylor, Nina Taylor, William Skipwith, Karen Basey, Shawna Morris, Marcus Taylor, Amos Taylor Jr, LaJuan Taylor, Nailah Jefferson, Dennis Jefferson, Benjamin Wynn, Sharice Wynn; 41 great-grandchildren; one great-great grandchild. He leaves a host of nieces, nephews, cousins and loved ones.

Rafe was preceded in death by his parents William and Minervy Demery Taylor; 7 sisters Polly, Tennessee, Della, Sweeney, Betty Jean, Pecole, Marie; 3 brothers Henry Taylor, Phillip Taylor, Elmore Taylor; two daughters Mildred Louise Davis, Marietta Jefferson; one son Amos Harriel Taylor; three grandsons Anthony Kendricks, Vincent Blakeney, Jason Jefferson; one great grand daughter, Chanel Perry.

ORDER OF SERVICE

Officiate- Pastor Todd M. Wheelock
Antioch Missionary Baptist Church

Musical Prelude . . . . . Bro. Paul Wade

Processional . . . . . Clergy and Family

Musical Selection . . . . . Minister Cynthia Harris
"Just A Closer Walk With Thee"

Scripture Reading –
Old Testament - Psalm 90: 1-6 . . . . . Rev. Billy Taylor
Allen Chapel A.M.E.

New Testament - St. John 14:1-6 . . . . . Rev. Eugene Williams
Church Without Walls

Prayer . . . . . Rev. Brian Hunter
Berkeley Mt. Zion

Musical Selection . . . . . Sis. Mattie Abner

Acknowledgments/Resolutions . . . . . Debra Taylor, Niece

Obituary . . . . . Read Silently

Reflections (Two minutes please) . . . . . *Antioch M.B. Church Family:* Bro. Eric Mitchell
Sis. Barbara Emery
Family: Larry Taylor, Nephew
Dr. Terri R. Jett, Granddaughter
Sons of Antioch M.B. Church: Rev. John Green - *St. Luke MBC (Ret)*
Rev. Harold B. George - *Christ Union MBC*
Rev. James Abner - *Revelation MBC*

Tribute to Uncle Rafe . . . . . Antoinette Taylor, Niece

Musical Selection . . . . . Minister Cynthia Harris
"Walk Around Heaven"

Eulogy . . . . . Rev. Dr. Martha C. Taylor (niece)
Pastor, Elmhurst Presbyterian Church

Musical Conclude . . . . . Bro. Paul Wade

Closing Prayer
Recessional

INTERMENT
Rolling Hills Memorial Park -Richmond, California
REPAST
Taylor Memorial United Methodist Church – 188 12th Street –Oakland, CA

Sharon
Rafe JR.
Elnora
Rafe SR.
Laura
Beatrice

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ROW

PALLBEARERS

Roger L. Helm II
Kenneth E. Jett
Cornelius "Cory" Price
William Skipwith
La Juan Taylor
Benjamin Wynn

HONORARY PALLBEARERS

Kenneth A. Jett
Arthur L. Johnson
Eddie Taylor
Flenore Taylor Sr.
Jonathan Taylor
Nathaniel Taylor
Charles Terry
Brandon Cooper

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The family of Rafe Taylor Sr., wishes to express our deepest appreciation to our many friends and family who have shown their love for Rafe throughout his life and the love for us in countless ways during this time of bereavement. We sincerely thank you for your prayers, kind deeds and many acts of generosity. May God Bless and keep each of you.

"He will live in Our Hearts Forever"

I AM ALWAYS WITH YOU

I am gone, release me, let me go.

I have so many things to see and do,
You mustn't tie yourself to me with too many tears,

But be thankful we had so many good years.

I gave you my love, and you can only guess
How much you've given me in happiness.

I thank you for the love that you have shown,
But now it is time I travel on alone.

So grieve for me a while, if grieve you must
Then let your grief be comforted by trust
That it is only for a while that we must part,
So treasure the memories within your heart.

I won't be far away for life goes on.

And if you need me, call and I will come.

Though you can't see or touch me, I will be near
And if you listen with your heart, you'll hear
All my love around you soft and clear

And then, when you come this way alone,
I'll greet you with a smile and a "Welcome Home."

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FOR "BIG DADDY"

*"**Big Daddy,** You are a father, teacher and best friend—*
and you will forever live in our hearts."
Love,
Benjie and Sharice

*"**Big Daddy",** You are the greatest guide for a man's life. You were blessed to live for 96 years and cultivate the knowledge you gave to me. I will work to carry on the legacy that you have left. I will see you when I get there—soon."*
Love,
Roger

Arrangements Made Especially For
The Taylor Family and Professionally Directed By

CP
BANNON
MORTUARY
6800 International Boulevard, Oakland, California
510-632-1011

Ekklesia Printing - Oakland, CA 510-652-1449